

Ireland and Apparition

Jilly always took girls to Ireland for a summer seminar. Ruth joined her towards the end this time, prior to researching Expressionist Art on the continent.

Dr O'Finerty returned that evening after his fortifying pub dinner and did a q&a with the girls on Folklore. They in their pyjamas and fuzzy slippers.

Jilly and Ruth had cocktails in next room, where Dr O'Finerty proved an agreeable drone. But a certain regional legend filtered through, to their giggles. A blacksmith had been struck by a local beauty and actually told her "I'll come to thee by Moonlight though hell should bar the way!"

"Uh huh?" whispered Ruth, "I know that chestnut poem!"

"Shh! The girls don't."

"Well mostly her high-born family barred the way, but the lovers persisted and eventually married. She became pregnant and the village couldn't leave off praising her beauty."

"Too great a cost!" Ruth opined.

"Then...awful then...she died in childbirth and the baby too. Their home atop the cliff became his silent refuge and he was never again seen in the village. One night, the moon like a sun, so large and bright, he walked off the cliff."

The girls moaned, but Dr O, the girls called him, hedged all round with disclaimers. "Of course only the old crones believe he did it. No body ever fished out of the cove. More likely he just moved away... sure and it's all enough to destroy you without his dying!"

Quite a bit later, Jilly heard the front door quietly close, and knew Ruth was embarking on one of her late walks.

Next morning her room is empty. just a forgotten gold lipstick atop the battered bureau.

She texts her. "Wha! No gdbye?"

Answer: "Nut-Air changed flite. Hadda lv b4 u rose. C u for din in mo?"

Jilly puzzles, it not feeling quite right, but has to get the girls packed for

the following morning and into the airport limo with minimum drama.

They meet after two months at Michael's Italy for an early dinner.
And don't mention Ireland at first.

Then Ruth looks up over spumoni and pronounces
"I saw him walk off the cliff."

Jilly laughs, and they finally agree a misty atmospheric that night,
coupled with Dr O's barrels of blarney, caused the illusion.

They go on to gossip about both of their oddball Chairs.

Ruth insists on a taxi since the traffic's excruciating, and she doesn't
want Jilly to suffer the long drive home after depositing her.

The sky forms fiery layers and it has rained. Ruth takes out the
lipstick, perhaps just to see it in the fire. Jilly waves goodbye
as she plays with it, the driver calling in his location.

Ruth forming the words behind the streaked window:
"I saw him..." as the cab pulls out.